

Greater India Series I

YOUTH AND THE NATION

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TO

SADHU HIRANAND
THE "YOUNG PIONEER."

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YOUTH AND THE NATION

AWAKE!

On the beach I stood ; the night was dark ;
There rolled the waves, and stars with waters played ;
Had they no secret from the storied past
To tell,—from olden, golden days when Ind
Wore Freedom's crown,—a Queen of all the East ?
I looked above, I looked below, then sighed ;
Big tears stood in mine eyes ; and as the wave
Against me lashed, I shed salt tears and cried
In peopled solitude of stars and seas :—
“ Thine Ancient Ind, O Lord ! is now a Slave ! ”
To you, O Nation's Youth ! I send the word
Which come to me from Spaces of the Deep :—
Awake ! how long in slumber will ye lie ?
Or rest and rust in dreams of ease and fame,
When Sacrificial God is marching on
And time it is to worship Him with DEED ?
Awake ! Ye sons of Sages of the East !
And build ye Freedom's Temple stone by stone !
O ! build in Vision of the Ancient Self !
And let each stone sing *Sacrifice* !

T. L. VASWANI



INTRODUCTION

In the following pages I have constantly in view the nation's youth; and I send this booklet forth in the hope that it may be of some interest and appeal to the Nation's Youth. In them is my hope.

Youth. I interpret it as the Energy of Renewal. There is, doubtless, a Principle of Renewal in Nature. So it is that new flowers, new forms, new colours, new songs beautify and bless nature every day. In nature is Eternal Youth.

The nations are groping in the night. But the dark precedes the Dawn.

And a prayer of my soul is that the coming Dawn may not be an angry Dawn!

Look at Europe! Forces of disintegration! Political anarchy! Lack of unity! Increasing death-rate!

Look at India! Appalling poverty! Scourge of famine and disease! Exploitation! Repression! Unrest! Superficial "peace"! Suppressed nationhood!

Europe is in ruins. And there are groups in the West that turn wistfully to India for a new world-view, a new word of power. I had a letter, sometime ago, from an esteemed friend, a Professor in the University of Vienna. He wants "Indianisation of

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Europe" ! The world is in need, in piteous need, of a new Civilisation. Will India help ?

India is too old, says a critic. But look at China ! She boasts of a civilisation at least 4,000 years old. And China is not under the yoke of another nation.

India can achieve little, says another critic ; for India has been under subjection for a long time. Yes,—but not longer than Egypt which was a subject country for almost 2,000 years. And Egypt is regaining its freedom, to-day.

India, says another critic, has many races, languages, and religions. But there are nations of Europe that have diversities in race, language, and religion. More than these, I submit, is *national sentiment* ; and this sentiment has been growing in India.

Yet something more than sentiment is needed if, indeed, a nation would work out its salvation. That 'something more' is *shakti*. Freedom grows out of *shakti*,—not paper-schemes and debates.

I believe there is in India such *shakti*. Once India was great in the domains at once of spiritual, political and socio-economic life. "History", said Dr. Besant in an eloquent address, "history never knew India as a weak nation". But to-day ? Who so weak as India ? Yet even to-day,—who so *potentially* strong as India ? With her 300 millions, inheritors of ancient culture, and by instinct religious, what may not India achieve ?

India's way, I hope, will not be the way of

violence and war. Yet we must show *shakti* before we reach Freedom or Freedom reaches us. We must accept an *inner transformation*. We must conquer ourselves,—our weaknesses.

This will not be achieved, I humbly submit, by counsels of reaction or violence. A crusade of Constructive Action is needed.

This calls for Bands of Young Idealists in different parts of the country. India's young men and women are rich in emotion. In them the nation has a splendid material for the building of a Great Future. Let but the Spirit Constructive be liberated. Let the young be organised in an All-India Movement. It will be a Movement of Idealism. And when Idealism acts, it becomes a thing of Fire,—invincible, unconquerable.

I know of several intelligent young Indians who argue that we must fight "materialistic England" with weapons of materialism. "Let us learn to be aggressive," said a patriotic student in deep earnestness. "We must have a blood-revolution", said another. "We needs must hate intensely", said a third. But hate is a force with a return-movement; and we find to-day that hate against the "stranger" is split up into communal hates. No; materialism, militarism, and hate-nationalism are weakening because they are disruptive agencies.

In vital idealism is the re-birth of nations. Who stood at the roots of the Christian Renaissance in Europe? Men like St. Bernard and St. Francis of

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Assisi. Who stood at the roots of India's renewal through the ages? Her Rishis, her practical mystics, her Prophets of the Ideal. What is needed to-day is Idealism incarnated in the lives of some young men filled with sacred passion for India's salvation.

The more I think of it, the more I feel that we must meet the present situation not with materialism and hate-nationalism but with an intensive constructive process.

This calls for (1) a new study of Indian Culture and (2) a new socio-economic construction of the village-life.

The first will show that the representative minds of India have, through the ages of her long history, taught a Doctrine of Love, not a Creed of Hate. The second will show how through fellowship with the poor India may be greatly helped to achieve her Quest.

A study of Indian Culture will give young men a new understanding of what India was in the days of her true greatness. This understanding will awaken a new love for the simple life and a new spirit of humanism such as will rise above parties and sects. In all races and religions is the One Spirit. This vision has nourished India's soul. This vision is needed to purify our nationalism and lift the youth above sectarianism. And young men, carrying to the villages the inspiration of this true Indian Idealism, will give a new impetus to India's cause. A nation may not hope to be great until it is true to

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its own special genius, its deeper self. And India's deeper Self has, through the centuries, borne witness to the One Spirit of Whom and in Whom are all beings, all nations, all races. If the youth of India become bearers of this Great Message, hate and strife in the name of 'creed' and 'country' will gradually go.

A message of *shakti*, this. It means a new faith in ourselves, a new consciousness of India's destiny, a new appreciation of the Ancient Ideal and its dormant forces for saving civilization, a new understanding of the two vital things in modern life, viz., Science and Democracy, a new education, a new health crusade, a new respect for the body as Krishna's temple and matter as vehicle of the Spirit, and a new reverence for God as the Great Brother of the Poor.

Young men ! You are the Builders of To-morrow !

By you may our broken, bleeding, nation be healed. But on this one condition that you are loyal to the Indian Ideal.

Believe me one of the grandest ideals known to history is the Indian Ideal. One of its notes is Simplicity. Greece worshipped beauty, India loved simplicity. To be simple is to be beautiful.

There is, to-day, a Youth Movement in Germany. In it are young people of the industrial class and the universities and high schools. They believe in re-construction on the basis of nature-fellowship and the simple life. Many of them go about

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bare-headed and bare-footed. They denounce luxury and cramping conventions. They live in open air. In groups of "Wandervogel" ("Wander-birds") they go about the country on Sundays, or holidays, collecting folk-songs and stories from the village-folk, sharing food with the peasants and helping them in their work in the fields. These young people scorn smoking and drinking and stiff collars and fashionable hair. They believe in the national value of folk-literature and music. They believe in Freedom and Strength. And deep in their hearts is faith in the Simple Life. These young people are, I believe, the Builders of a New Germany.

In you that are young, India has a splendid material for the building of a Great Future, if you will be simple. And the flower of simple life is *brahmacharya*. It was the fundamental virtue of the Aryan student. The Indian student has, to-day, forgotten *brahmacharya*. There is *bhoga* in his dress and diet and daily life. Let me ask you to practise *brahmacharya*. It will build your bodies and minds. It will build your character. No virtue without strength. Weakness has been our sin. Some, like Arnold, plead for beauty. Some for intellectual awakening. I am an integrist. I plead for Integral Culture, Culture of the *whole* man, Culture of Manhood, of *Shakti*.

I believe profoundly that to achieve her Quest India must, by supreme self-renunciation, give up the inert self, the dead self which has stayed with her

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for centuries. She must recover her true Self. India's Soul is waiting to be incarnated in a New Nation. This thought gives me hope in the midst of the forces of failure and anarchy in our life to-day.

This thought speaks to me by day. This thought wakes me up at night.

It is the thought of a deeper nation, a stronger nation, a New India, an India that may become a World-Healer, a World-Teacher and, therefore, an humble servant of Humanity.

To such an India, may the best among the nation's youth give the best of gifts,—*themselves*!

KARACHI,

November 1925. }

T. L. VASWANI.

GUARDIANS OF THE GATE.

The coming Movement of Renaissance and Reconstruction must be led by the nation's youth.

I have called them the Builders of To-morrow. May I not, also, call them the Gatekeepers of the Future? Guardians of the Gate? Each race has fashioned God in its own image. The Scandinavian race gave a grave gray beard to its god, and the Syrian a hooked nose! India has worshipped God as Krishna, the Eternal Youth.

Many in many lands who read the clock of time understand that everywhere it is the nation's youth that are the nation's destiny. And so in the midst of much that is depressing, men are turning with new hopes towards the young.

My hope for India is in the youth of India. Many of the controversies of these days are of passing interest. It is the mind and character, the faith and vision of the young that will build a New India. May it be an India more beautiful than many dream of! May it be an India crowned with glory of the Great Vision her sages and seers have worshipped through the Ages!

Ask history and you will know how much the young may do for national life. At the fore-front of Asian countries stands Japan. How much she owes

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to her young men! Some of them felt that Japan must be *transformed* to become truly great. And they were not disdainful of the West. I who believe profoundly in the values of Asian idealism, I hold that we must learn of the West a number of things in a spirit of humility. Science, sanitation, and organisation are three of the things we must learn of modern Europe. And a band of young men went from Japan to the West to study medicine, science, technics. Ito and his comrades battled with the prejudices of their country, educated themselves in Europe for patriotic service, returned to Japan and spread the message of modern knowledge. They created the new army and navy of Japan; they infused in their country a new spirit of discipline and work. Japan's life was renewed by the spirit of her youth. And Japan met with singular courage and wisdom the Russian menace.

It is true Japan became 'modernised' and militarised over much. Japan caught the infection of Europe's economic imperialism. Japan's treatment of Korea cannot be too strongly condemned. It is regrettable that while accepting Western science, Japan, also, accepted the Western *philosophy of life*. We must distinguish between the two. The first glamour of the West has, in every case, been too much for the East. But here, again, let us not forget that it is young men in Japan who are endeavouring to-day to correct the aberrations of "modernism" and helping her, while assimilating

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the truth in Western institutions, to stand true to her own self, her Asian idealism. They are trying to check the materialistic and militaristic tendencies in their country. When the Japanese Association for the Study of Military Science held its inaugural session in the auditorium of Waseda University at Tokyo in 1923, it was found that pacifist students were in an overwhelming majority. They protested loudly :—"Down with the militarists!" They called for a Convention to agitate against militarism. They sang :—"Thousands die to raise one hero to fame." A Japanese journal referred to this event as "revealing to the public mind the alarming changes that have come over the ideas of Japan's rising generation!" Anti-imperialistic ideas are growing among young men; and not a few of them to-day are demanding that Japan must end her aggressiveness in China and give autonomy to Korea. In such young men and women is the hope of Japan.

Take China. We read in the papers of 'chaos' in China. It is true China is in an unsettled condition. But we must not forget that within it forces for the building of a new order. There are constructive forces in the present 'chaos.' These forces work, in no small measure, through students and young men. It was they who initiated a Chinese Renaissance. They went to villages and awakened the masses. To-day there is increasing hunger for knowledge. The number of pupils in 'modern schools' was tripled in nine years. Circulating libraries, lecture

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booths, reading rooms, half-day schools for the poor and destitute and open-air schools have multiplied fast. "Diligence is praiseworthy, play is unprofitable,"—was an old Chinese motto. It has been discarded; a new love for physical culture inspires the Chinese youth. They, too, started and sustained the Chinese Swadeshi Movement. They continue to strengthen the patriotic spirit. In one of their organs named the "Students' Review," a young man asks:—"What is patriotism?" And he answers the question in the following beautiful words:—"Patriotism is ardent love put at the service of one's country. Patriotism is the soul of the nation. A people without patriotism does not deserve to exist."

There is a movement in China known as the "New Thought Movement." Its aims are:—(1) to develop the critical mind, and (2) to frankly fight against the *weak* points in national life and character. Young China is not conservative. It has a progressive outlook. It is eager to transform its social life. It believes in a gospel of *shakti*, or strength, of energy, freedom—a gospel of Action. "Sow the seeds of a new life;" writes a young Chinaman, "shake off your shackles. Ours is the age of emancipation,—of civil, religious and financial emancipation. Woman is being emancipated from the yoke of man. Be progressive. We need men of action, men of enterprise, men of energy." There is about young China's outlook on life a commendable dash, a note of strength, of *shakti*. None but the brave deserve liberty.

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Young China believes in the supreme value of Unity. A Chinese text-book puts it beautifully,—“We must make a single heart out of the hearts of all citizens.” The lesson of unity is taught in schools. Early impressions are not easily effaced. Young men in China go about proclaiming vitalising truths such as—“It is the duty of every man to defend his country.” “We must be loyal and faithful to the nation. It is part of our inborn duty.” “Prevent the country from being insulted and attacked.”

Above all, young China believes in self-reliance. No cheap counsels of imitation ever built a nation. We must build from within,—must look for inspiration to our own genius. As a Chinese text-book says:—“We must have an ideal to serve and must find it in our own Race.” And young men in China go about proclaiming Confucius as the inspirer of their Race. The Doctrine of Confucius is regarded as the root of moral life. And the faith of Young China is expressed in significant words:—“As a master and model of the past and future generations, there is none equal to Confucius.” How many of India’s young men feel the inspiration of the lives of Rama and Krishna and Buddha? How many know the literature and philosophy of India? How many know her culture and history? How many understand that her spiritual ideals have a world-value? It is easy to shout “*Bharat Mata*” and “*Bande Mataram*.” But how many would meet an “out-caste” as a brother?

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In Korea, too, the youth have done much for their country. Korean girls were the first to help. As one of them said at a ladies' meeting:—"We would awake the men." Young men followed. Several of them were rich men's sons. They renounced luxuries; they endured privations. They thought of their country's good, not personal comforts and 'careers'. They had heard the Country's Call. They had glimpsed an Ideal. A young man, belonging to a good family, was in tattered clothes. He was not even sure of two meals a day. He endured it all, he said, "for Korea's sake."

In Egypt, again, it was a young man who laid the foundations of the Egyptian national movement. His name was Kemal Pasha. He must not be confounded with his more famous namesake, the saviour of Turkey. Kemal Pasha of Egypt died when he was about 30 years of age! But he did wonderful work in a few years.

He had riches; he had talents; he wrote beautiful French, and in his heart was burning love for Egypt. He spent his fortune in starting institutions for the education of young Egypt. He built a National College. And he taught the youth to claim 'Egypt for Egyptians'. Years ago I spoke at Swansea in Wales. At the close of my address, some of the Welsh men and women came up to me to shake hands with me and express their kind appreciation. Then I saw by me a dark-faced young man. He belonged to the young party in Egypt. With proud

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dignity he turned to the Welsh men and women; then looked at me, and said to them:—"We are proud of him, our Asian brother." In the heart of this young Egyptian was a beautiful sentiment. I was not an Egyptian. Patriotism is broader than nationalism. There is something broader still. It is reverence for Humanity. I would have India's young men grow in this sentiment. It pains me to see patriotism confounded with hate for the Englishman or the European. I ask for freedom for India. But I ask it in the name of Humanity. There is no hate for the "stranger" in my heart. Some of these "strangers", the great sages and thinkers of modern Europe, are in a profound sense, our very own. I sometimes think of them as India's rishis reborn in the West! Young men of India! Let your patriotism grow out of the great intuition of the Asian soul:—"Verily, there is but One self in all." Resist the temptations of narrow nationalisms. India has worshipped not a state, not a nation, not an 'empire,' but humanity—aye, something vaster, what the Scriptures call Visva, the All, the Cosmic Whole. If you will be true to India, then try to live up to Her ideals and give worship to the vision of Her mighty sons and servants from the Vedic age downwards.

Turn we now to another country—Germany. In poverty and suffering lies to-day the land of Kant and Goethe. It is impossible not to sympathise with Germany. Her hope is in the young. In their hearts flows a mighty love for the poor, glows a mighty faith

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in the future. They dream the dream of "building a new world and a new humanity." Some of them met near Berlin, sometime ago, and adopted as their motto—"Salvation lies in self-education." To-day that motto has been amplified into:—"Salvation through simplicity and service." Their ideal, they say, is "to form our own life in sincerity and upon our own responsibility." They have started a reaction against the conventional and artificial in customs, in creeds, in education. "We will no more go back," they say, "and perish in that prison which people call 'school.' "They seek life's inspiration in the triple love,—of nature, of the labouring classes, and of their native land. The youth of Germany are swayed, to-day, by a truly patriotic search for a spiritual centre of life. This is how these young men define their ideal:—

Our aim is the return from decadent civilisation to natural simplicity, from all that is external to that which is inward and spontaneous, from futile pleasures to real joy, from selfishness to the spirit of brotherhood, from loose ways to thoughtful self-realisation. We seek to set our souls right with God, with ourselves, with our fellows and with nature.

They realise that a country's foes are materialism and indifference. They do not smoke or drink—these young men. They shun devitalising pleasures. They love the wonderful music of their native land. "It is all we have left,"—said a German young man. They sleep on the floor. They move out on Sundays to villages and serve peasants in the fields and share

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with them their bread. They ask the village-folk to boycott alcohol and "fashions." They love gymnastics and folk-songs of the Fatherland. They love nature. Plainly clad, with staffs in their hands, they wander from place to place asking the people to resist deterioration and immorality, and to be New Men.

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India's youth can do much,—can initiate a creative crisis,—if they resolve to be "New Men." An All-India League of youth is needed. It can abolish drink, spread Swadeshi, open up centres of education in villages, improve sanitation in rural areas, distribute medicines among the village-folk and rescue thousands in the malarial season, introduce cottage industries, elevate the "untouchables," carry to millions the message of India and of India's Faith in the eternal values of life.

I was in Bengal in 1906-8. I found students and young men clad in swadeshi cloth. Women, too, helped in spreading the swadeshi message. There was tremendous enthusiasm. And I said:—The youth of Bengal have heard the Voice of the Mother. How many hear the Voice to-day?

I went to Gujrat a few years ago. I went there to preside at a Students' Conference in Ahmedabad. I saw the youth clad in Khadi. In what language was I to speak to them? I did not know Gujrati my

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Hindi was broken. Before I began, one of them rose to ask me to speak in Hindi, *not* English. They took pride in the nation's language. I said the youth of Gujrat have heard the Voice of the Mother. How many hear the Voice to-day?

In Japan they have a day in the year when students and the youth visit the tombs of their Heroes. In Hyderabad, Sind, stands the *samadhi* of one whom I regard as one of the noblest sons of modern India—Hiranand, the Herald of Renaissance in Sind. Hiranand lived and laboured in Sind. And in a beautiful spot stands his *samadhi*. But how many of the Sindhis go to pay homage to him at the *samadhi*? How many hear the Mother's Voice to-day?

In Berlin I found young men so proud of Goethe and Schiller. With what reverence the German youth uttered the names of their poets and thinkers! If Germany has her Goethe, Sind has her Shah Abdul Latif. If Germany has her Schiller, Sind has Bekas. Yet how many of the Sindhi youth read Shah Latif or realise his greatness? And at a fair held in honour of Bekas at Rohri, I saw shopkeepers and the "illiterate," but not the 'educated' youth of Sind!

Prague is an important University centre. There studied some young men of Ukrania. Asked why they studied there and what they would do in life, they said:—"We will go back to our lands and be the servants of our people." Contrast with this the answer given by a young man of Sind to similar questions:—

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"Why are you studying, and what will you do in life?" I asked. And he said:—"I shall take the degree, then enter the revenue department, and loot government and make lakhs of rupees in a few years"! It is, unfortunately, too true that the dominating thought of many a Sindhi youth is to make money or to carve out a "personal" career. How many hear the Mother's Voice? How many in Sind? How many in India?

In ancient days the Master said to his disciple:—"Go ye, O Bikhus! to different lands, and ask the people if they keep memory." I, too, a *bikhu*; and to you, young men of India! to you I bring the question:—Do you keep memory? Or are you still in forgetfulness? You tell me there are schools and colleges and other activities. I ask in humility:—Is there in them a remembrance of India? Are you in touch with the nation-soul? The Bharat Atma? Do you hear the Mother's Voice?

It is a voice sounding across the centuries:—"Uttishta Jagrata," "Awake! Arise!" Opinions and creeds have changed. But the Voice of the Mother has spoken century after century. We are fallen; but the Voice of the Mother is alive.

I am not pessimistic. Pessimism is going backwards. And I believe profoundly that there is creative energy in youth. The young can, if they will, build a New Order in India. What they need is a *culture of manhood*. One aspect of it is *simplicity*. If you would be *men*, be *simple*. The greatest ones

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of India, including Sadhu Hiranand of blessed memory, have borne testimony to the beauty of the simple life. This, indeed, is one of the essential marks of the national culture and life of India. The greater the man, the simpler is he in life. This is the age-long witness of Indian history.

Sometime ago, the students of the University of Cordova went through the streets in a procession, and the words written on their banners were the famous words of Goethe:—"Light, more Light." The youth of India, too, ask for "Light, more Light." Schools are multiplying; the power of the press is growing; young men want to know more of modern life and modern movements. "Light, more Light!" But the question is:—*what* Light! A young man in fashionable dress and proud of his little English learning, felt shy of showing respect to his own father because he did not know English and was clothed in the simple dress of an earlier generation. Not this the true light of knowledge. And I have known young men proud of their learning but using it, abusing it, to rob others of their money and self respect. Such learning is *not* the light the country needs. Cleverness without character is a destructive force. What, after all, is cleverness? Goethe's Mephisto is a type of 'cleverness!' And he represents the 'Devil' in literature! Themistocles was a man of marvellous cleverness and he formed a coalition with the enemy of his country. Alcibiades was amazingly clever; and he became an opportunist! "Light, more

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Light!" Yes. But that light is the light of Love. The love that expresses itself as the service of the poor and weak. The love that is given to all men, all nations, all races. True knowledge shines with the light of Love. True culture makes you feel that your home is in the heart of Humanity. Let us not confound patriotism with *sectionalism* or *sectarianism*. Nationalism is a poor, shrunken thing when it hates other nations, other races. In France they have a band of young men named the *Young Republic*; and one of their mottoes is:—"The things of the Spirit are greater than the power of Hate". A beautiful motto this. I ask you to believe in the things of the Spirit. I ask you to have no hate in your hearts for other nations, other races. For hate weakens, but the Spirit regenerates and rejuvenates.

I read the other day of an Irish lad shot through the body by some men who came with rifles to force open his father's shop. And dying with his head on the knees of a faithful servant the boy spoke words which I will not easily forget. He said with his dying breath:—"I hate no one; I love my mother." And to you that are young, I say in the words of that brave, beautiful Irish lad:—"Hate no one; love your Mother!" Love Her and let that love teach you to serve Humanity. The Call of the New Era is Unity. The Old Era with its thought of Separation is dying.

The nation's youth are called to a great work. But they cannot do it until they come upon a new

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urge, a new life, a new Spirit. . . Clever men, brilliant, 'successful',—many, many such has India to-day. She needs new men. Materialisation of the intellect, the cult of 'success' cannot help India. India will rise again through the power of the life of the Spirit. A new Civilization, one in which may be blended the Ancient Wisdom of the East and the flowers of Western science and art,—a new vital Civilization is the world's need. Therefore I say to the youth of India:—Light! more Light! The Light of the knowledge that deepens into love. O! Keep the Light burning! The Voices of the Dawn are waiting to greet you!

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In what words may I speak of him? There sings in my heart a voice. It says:—‘The Lord giveth unto every one; but how many are ready to receive?’ His gifts are everywhere. And His servants appear in every land, in every age. To Sind God out of His rich store sent a precious soul. ‘The Lord giveth, but how many are ready to receive?’ If indeed, Sind had assimilated the life-ideal of gentle Hiranand, she would be different to-day.

Listen to what two great souls said in witness of Hiranand. One a Muslim. The other a Hindu. The Muslim’s name is not known to many in this country—Jelaludin. Hindus are thinking to-day of SANGATHAN. Many years ago Jelaludin conceived the idea of a Muslim sangathan. A great traveller, a great lover of Islam and Asian unity was this Jellal-ud-din. Hiranand met him in Calcutta. Hiranand was then a youth of 19 studying for the Degree Examination. And of Hiranand, Jelaludin said:—“In this youth is the seed of greatness”.

The other great soul’s name is well-known the world over, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. So wonderful was this saint’s love for God that if one but whispered in his ears the name Hari (God), he would fall into a state of “unconsciousness” which was, in truth, a state of super-consciousness, a state of

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SAMADHI. And this saint loved and blessed Hiranand. He often went to Sri Ramakrishna and talked to him and shampooed him and rubbed his body with oil for bath and served him in other ways. The saint asked Hiranand one day:—"How far is your Hyderabad?" And Hiranand said:—"About 2,000 miles away." The saint said in his child-like way:—"So there is God's man even so far off. Blessed be God!" God's man, indeed, was Hiranand. He was of the race of mystics. By temperament he loved seclusion and solitude. In his heart was deep longing for communion with God.

I saw him years ago. I sat at his feet to learn what he taught in his simple, homely way. Stories he gave us and lessons in history and poems, and, above all, the great poem of his life. It was a life full of tender grace and beauty and love.

On the 14th of July, 1892, passed away Hiranand. Where is the like of him to-day in Sind? He spent himself in the service of his people. His patriotism was of the purest love. He loved the poor and served the sick with singular devotion. Not without reason is the Karachi Leper Asylum associated with his name. And he realised that in daily prayer was given the power to serve. He realised, too, that worship was incomplete without service of the poor. This *synthesis* made his life beautiful.

He lived no more than 30 years. He served Sind for a few years only. But they were years abundantly blessed. Born in Hyderabad, he died in distant

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Bankipur. His the life of an humble soul. A soul is great in the measure it is humble. There are men who shine as meteors and soon pass away. Hiranand's life shines with steady light.

The secret of his greatness! Let Hiranand speak for himself. When a member of *The Eagle's Nest* in Calcutta, he kept a journal in which he wrote the following words: "Father! May I ever aspire to be Thy faithful child!" Hiranand was an Idealist, and worshipping the Ideal and serving the people, he fulfilled his aspiration to be a "faithful child" of the All-Father.

I regard Hiranand as one of the greatest Indians of modern India. Studying his life, I have again and again been reminded of S. Francis of Assisi and of the Japanese Patriot, Sonatoku. All the three had in common, as it seems to me, four important characteristics.

The first was *Renunciation*. Hiranand never wished to make money or build big houses. He came back from Bengal to Sindh with the spirit in him of a *tyâgi* or *fakir*. He was the presiding officer of the "Academy," but he drew not a rupee for his work. The second quality one noticed in Hiranand's life was *Love of the Poor*. Day and night he served the poor when cholera broke out at Hyderabad. The third quality was *Humility*. Hiranand was humble. If many of our activities do not prove fruitful, the reason is not far to seek. They are not inspired by humility. A fourth quality is *Upâsanâ* (worship). *Upâsanâ*

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means, literally, *sitting under*. Sitting under the influence of the Atman—that is true worship. Religion is not mere rites or outer forms; religion lies in *discovering ourselves*, discovering the *Atman*, the spiritual in us. India must discover herself, the teachings of her history, the ideals of her sages. In this *self-discovery*, this return of India to her own self, is the meaning, as I understand it, of Swaraj. The life of Hiranand is a call to his countrymen to turn from distractions and excitements to their *true selves*. There is an *inner kingdom*, a kingdom of souls, to which we all belong. To this, Hiranand bore witness. To this must India bear witness, if she would win true Freedom in the days to come.

We talk of Swadeshi as though it were a discovery of our day! Hiranand was always clad in plain Sindhi home-spun. We talk of liquor-boycott. A generation ago, he began in Sind an anti-liquor campaign. He began it at a time when crowds did not cheer him for his work. I know they flung mud and stones at him. But he went about doing good. Neither in his Swadeshi nor his temperance campaigns was there the least element of bitterness or hate to the "foreigner," or to those who would not see eye to eye with him. He believed in self suffering, in silent prayer. And who believed more profoundly in the value of vernaculars? He edited more than one Sindhi paper; he lectured to men and women in vernacular. But he did not taboo English. He believed in the value of English language and literature; and he

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recited to us with emotion some most moving passages from Shakespeare.

We talk to-day of village propaganda. Hiranand began village propaganda more than 30 years ago. We talk of National Education; he founded the first National School in Sind. He did not take a rupee from the school funds for himself. In his system of education, there was place for music, for art, for physical training, for religion. And he did not train students for material success; he taught them to express life; he trained the impulses of his pupils not by repression, but through the spiritual power of love. And the one idea he tried, in many ways, to make clear to us was that education was training in the service of society. And is not the great lesson of world history this knowledge is for social ends? Politics have yet to recover their soul; ideal forces have yet to regain power; and this may not be until there is a new renaissance of education. Hiranand initiated a renaissance in Sind. It has been arrested; there is need of a new renaissance of education; there is need of teachers who would withdraw their time from the service of the self and hand it over to God. Such teachers, not buildings and creeds, make the schools truly National. And when true National Schools spring up in Sind, the seed-grain which Sadhu Hiranand sowed, will yield much fruit.

Here then, you have the secret of Hiranand's life: he withdrew his time from the service of self and handed it over to God. There is a saying the German

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poet puts in the mouth of Faust: "What from the world have I to gain? Thou must renounce, renounce." But Faust spoke of the world in morbid despair; Hiranand practised renunciation in joy. With joy he went to serve patients in the hospital, with joy he went to the cholera-stricken to heal them; with joy he went to poor women and widows to succour them; with joy he nursed his dear daughter day after day and night after night until he himself caught the fatal fever, and died in 1892, at the early age of 30.

His life in Sind was not lent him on easy terms; he was misunderstood as pioneers often are; but he did not flinch in his loyalty to the ideal.

He started the "Academy" for training the Sindhi youth; several spoke ill of it. I remember when I joined it, it was said that the school was a half-way house to Christianity! He organised a "band of hope", and as it led processions through the streets and bazars of Hyderabad, some jeered at him some threw stones and mud at him; some fashionable gentlemen, drunk with pride, fancied he was wasting time and perverting the youth. He worked on "with heart within and God over-head". His whole heart went out in sympathy to the Hindu woman. He yearned to do something for her; he wished to begin with the education of girls. He desired to set an example; he proposed to send his girl to Bankipur for education; he was opposed in his own house; he worked on alone anxious to be loyal to the ideal, not thinking of the fruit. A wave of atheism was passing

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over Hyderabad; a few undergraduates of the College, smitten with passion for novelty, confessed the creed of atheism. Hiranand opened a series of discourses on the Spiritual Ideal; he stemmed the tide of atheism.

Hiranand was unconscious of his greatness; his quiet character created deep impression on those who came in contact with him. Humility was the secret of the capacity he had of awakening love. Armed with humility, he overcame opposition; he outlived hostility. There is profound philosophy in the words of S. Thomas of Aquinas: "If you would raise on high the edifice of holiness, take humility for your foundation."

Hiranand was known for his simplicity; he was born in one of the noblest families of Sind; he rejoiced "in deep and simple things" and "had no hankering after glitterings." His simplicity was an expression of his humility. Here is a lesson from the life of Hiranand for young men. If they could but realise the significance of the gospel of simple life! The law of simple life is: *Be thyself*.

Of Hiranand we may say what Shelley said of himself: "He was the friend of the unfriended poor." Hiranand was the Prince with the great heart, concerning whom we read in *Mahābhārata* that he would not enter paradise alone, but only in the company of his brothers and sisters. And Hiranand discerned the truth that he could not give himself rest when his brothers and sisters were in poverty and pain.

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II

The pure spirit of religion penetrated Hiranand: Spirituality was the flaming light of his idealism. He had the love of interior life; he would often return to quiet corners in his house, school or the “*mandir*” to practise the presence of God. His *Journal* is a running commentary on his spirit of self-examination, and self-recollection.

Here are a few extracts from the private *Journal* of Hiranand:

I feel no pain ; neither do I feel joy. When shall I reach that state when my whole frame shall testify to the happiness of human life, when the breath that I draw shall whisper to all that to live is to be happy, that life is a blessing, that life with all its painful accompaniments is worth living? 'Tis an abominable lie to say that man is born to misery.

In a section on “The Believer’s Creed” Hiranand has the following:

That life is real and no dream.

That life is sacred and has a definite purpose and is not a farce or without a purpose.

That the world is governed by laws, which in their effects, in relation to man, are painful or pleasurable, friendly or inimical.

That the punishment of sin is instantaneous.

That Christ’s law of love is higher than Moses’ law of force.

Again:—*Some sacred joy uplifts me. What is it? It*

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is a feeling that there is enough room in the wide world. Only let me strive to secure my seat.

What do you mean to do in life? To win praise and applause? No. To sacrifice? But how? I do not know yet.

The whole world carries to us the message of love and forbearance. The stars above and the grass below, they all tell of peace, of love, or gentle dealing, of patient charity, of goodwill. The transcendental star and the ignoble lowly grass are in the scheme of Nature work in harmony. And so should we. The high and the low, the great and the small, the idle and the industrious, should work in blessed union and love, helping and directing one another. Dear brother, merging all difficulties and distractions in our common love, we should work conjointly for one another in affectionate union.

Glory, glory unto thee, O Creator Divine, my Father, my eternal Friend! May I ever aspire to be thy faithful child!

Like the birds of the air and beasts of the field, let me sing, inarticulate, my hymn to the Creator who sent the sun and the dawn.

Glory, glory unto the Light of the Universe. Joy Infinite! May I mingle my voice with the rest of Thy Creation, and in accents sweet and harmonious lisp out Thy praise!"

Many incidents, many aspects of his life, I have not touched upon; but as I have recalled them to myself, the one thought they have whispered again and again, is: Hiranand lived not for self but for casting self aside in the service of others. Of him may be spoken the words written in an Ancient Book:

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"He hath overthrown the Banner of Pride; he hath won the triple Treasure." With affectionate reverence do I bring at his feet my little flowers, year after year. And in the tumults and passions of these days, my thoughts have gone out to him again and again. For he teaches that true Freedom is not won without sadhan, without discipline, without the power of the Ideal. In a recent story, *The Fall of Atlantis*, we read of the decline and fall of an ancient State. Once Atlantis was great in science and art; then it clamored for freedom without discipline; and it fell. And if in the struggle of to-day, we trample upon the Ideal, we may multiply the vibrations of hate and violence but we will not get the power to build true Freedom. For that power comes from the Lord of the Nation. And He gives it to those who would grow in humility, in the simple life that flowers in Sacrifice.

Hiranand died young; and the day, I trust, is coming when Young India may learn to know his simple, beautiful life and feel its inspiration. He loved the young and loved the poor and loved Silence. Have you never asked why there is a plaintive note in Sindhi poetry? Sind has been in subjection century after century. And the soul of Sind has sung of a Kingdom of Silence,—an Inner Kingdom. A servant of that Kingdom was Sadhu Hiranand. Hence the truly national character of his life. For out of the Spiritual are the issues of national life. And India will be built, not by Shouts and Shows, but in Silence and Sacrifice.

